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Birkholz begins hearings on improving the state's waste management laws

Senator wants to know what tools need to be added to guarantee the safety of Michigan's citizens and the environment

LANSING--Senator Patty Birkholz (R-Saugatuck Twp) announced today the formulation of a package of bipartisan bills that would provide for enacting new landfill bans and giving new authority to the DEQ Director to restrict waste shipments in the event of a public health or environmental threat. These bills will also step up inspections and penalties for those who violate the state's waste management laws. Senator Birkholz commented that the package will receive prompt and decisive action in the next two weeks.

"There is much more we can do for our citizens to ensure that the waste in our state is cleaner and free from diseases and that valuable materials that could be recycled are kept out of the waste stream," said Birkholz, the lead sponsor of the legislation.

The Senate Natural Resources and Environmental Affairs Committee asked the Department of Environmental Quality to provide testimony on the issue of what steps the state can take for better management of its waste stream in order to protect its citizens and the natural resources. This testimony confirmed committee members' beliefs that there are new directions the state can take in improving waste management laws.

The Senate Natural Resources and Environmental Affairs Committee will be holding a hearing next Tuesday, Sept. 30 to hear further testimony on this legislation. The committee expects to vote on the legislation the following Tuesday, Oct. 7. Both of these meetings will take place at 3:00 p.m. in 110 Farnum in Lansing. For further information on the legislation, or for those who would like to speak at the hearing, please contact Sen. Birkholz's office at 517-373-3447.

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Comments from Senator Birkholz on the Waste Management Legislation are available for download on the Senate Majority Audiowire at www.senate.michigan.gov/gop or by calling the radio hotline at 517-373-4000.